REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the Interview held on December 17, 2004 and for indicating that the proposed amendment to claim 1 appears to overcome the art of record..

Claims 1-2, 4-16, and 18-20 are pending. By this amendment, claims 1, 9, and 15 are amended. No new matter is introduced. Support for the amendments may be found at least at page 1, lines 22-28, page 3, line 31 to page 4, line 9, and page 6, lines 13-18 of the specification. Reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims is respectfully requested in view of the preceding amendments and following remarks.

Entry of the above amendments is proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 because the amendments (1) place the claims in better form for appeal if needed; and (2) do not introduce any elements requiring further search by the Examiner.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-2, 4-16, and 18-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 (a) over U.S. Patent 6,604,108 to Nitahara (hereafter Nitahara). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Nitahara is directed to an information mart system and information mart browser. The information mart system collects financial and testing data in the context of drug testing by pharmaceutical companies. However, as agreed upon during the Interview, Nitahara does not disclose or suggest "maintaining database tables in individual data contexts, wherein the database tables contain data from multiple data sources, and wherein data in one data source has a same identifier as a duplicate data in another data source; appending a source identifier as a key field to the data before merging the database tables into one larger table in a display context so that name spaces of the data are unique within each data context; merging the database tables into one larger table in the display context by blending the data from the multiple data sources without violating relational database rules," as recited in amended claim 1 (emphasis added).

The conduits recited in claim 1 provide an abstraction layer to make the data unique so that the data can be combined into a single database without violating relational database rules. The specification provides in the Background Section at page 1, lines 21-28:

> The relational database model used by many database management systems can manage data from a single source. Faced with multiple data sources, (for example, multiple connections to the same databases or servers via the API, or live connections to databases or servers in conjunction with open copies of previously saved data,) a user typically must launch a completely separate user interface to manage each data source, because the duplicate data from the various sources described above can lead to

duplication of database keys used to access and manage the data. This is a violation of the relational database model that cannot be allowed.

(Emphasis added). Further, the present application describes at page 3, line 31 to page 4, line 9:

> When a data source is open, the data source typically refers to each fundamental element, such as a cluster, a node, or a package, by a unique identifier. In other words, all key fields for the database may be unique in individual data context. However, if data from the individual data context are blended together, or if two data sources are open at the same time, the identifiers of the saved file may be the same as the identifiers in the live connection to the clusters, nodes, and packages. In other words, primary keys of database tables, i.e., name spaces, are no longer unique, violating the relational database model.
>
> The method for managing data from multiple data sources using conduits involves maintaining database tables for each data source in individual data context, and merging the database tables into larger tables in a display context. The method ensures key values within the display data context are unique by appending a source identifier as a key field to the data before combining or updating the database tables in the display context.

(Emphasis added). When data in one data source has a same identifier as a duplicate data in another data source, merging database tables containing these data will lead to violation of the relational database rules, as explained above. The method recited in claim 1 solves this problem by appending a source identifier as a key field to the data. The method merges the database tables into one larger table by blending the data from the multiple data sources without violating the relational database rules. Figure 14 (and corresponding text) of Nitahara merely shows one table containing five primary frames of equal quadrants to display information mart files. Nowhere does Nitahara shows merging database tables and blending data (with potential same identifiers) from multiple data sources without violating the relational database rules. Therefore, claim 1 is allowable.

Claims 2 and 4-8 are allowable because they depend from allowable claim 1 and for the additional features they recite.

Regarding claim 9, for at least the same reason as stated above with respect to claim 1, Nitahara does not disclose or suggest "one or more data contexts ... wherein data in one data source has a same identifier as a duplicate data in another data source ... a conduit that append a source identifier as a key field to the data before merging the database tables into one larger table in the display context so that name spaces of the data are unique within each data context, wherein the data from the multiple data sources are blended and merged into the

one larger table without violating relational database rules," as recited in amended claim 9 (emphasis added). Since Nitahara does not disclose or suggest all of the elements of amended claim 9, claim 9 is allowable.

Claims 10-14 are allowable because they depend from allowable claim 9 and for the additional features they recite.

Regarding claim 15, for at least the same reason as stated above with respect to claim 1, Nitahara does not disclose or suggest "maintaining database tables in individual data contexts, wherein the database tables contain data from multiple data sources, and wherein data in one data source has a same identifier as a duplicate data in another data source; appending a source identifier as a key field to the data before merging the database tables into one larger table in a display context so that name spaces of the data are unique within each data context; merging the database tables into one larger table in the display context by blending the data from the multiple data sources without violating relational database rules," as recited in amended claim 15 (emphasis added). Since Nitahara does not disclose or suggest all of the elements of amended claim 15, claim 15 is allowable.
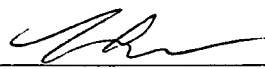
Claims 16 and 18-20 are allowable because they depend from allowable claim 15 and for the additional features they recite. Withdrawal of rejections of claims 1-2, 4-16, and 18-20 is respectfully requested.

In view of the above remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance. Prompt examination and allowance are respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desired in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: **February 2, 2005**

Kelly T. Lee
Registration No. 47,743
Andrews & Kurth LLP
1701 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
Suite 300
Washington, DC 20006
Tel. (202) 662-2736
Fax (202) 662-2739